Cobb County Community Development Agency



ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN GUIDELINES

FOR COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT, REDEVELOPMENT OR BUILDING RENOVATIONS

DECEMBER 2005 (Revised) OCTOBER 2004

ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN PROJECT INFORMATION

Project Name(Include Building number and/or	phase if applicable)
(LDP)# Land Disturbance Permit	Zoning Catagory
Zoning Catagory of Adjacent Pro	pperty
Building Facade Material	
Roofing Material	
Mechanical Equiptment Screenin (Type & Material)	g
Dumpster Enclosure(Type & Material)	
Total Desigin Score From Works	heet
Company Name	
Contact Person	Phone
Signature	Date
1. Elevation drawings 2. Footprint of building calculation purpos 3. List of building ma	w will be done concurrently with structural reviews. The mitted with Architectural/Structural drawings: s of all sides of building. In many size, and style associated color, size, and style. Stectural review worksheet.
Approved by	Date

Goals & Objectives

The goal of the Cobb County Architectural Design Guidelines is to provide a method to create better designs for commercial/retail/office/institutional buildings within the County. The ultimate design of a building is in many ways an artistic expression and cannot be quantified or easily regulated. However, some basic design features of a building's footprint and exterior are essential and will go a long way towards discouraging a featureless redundancy of architecture and improving the visual interest in a building's appearance from the street. As studies indicate, retail/commercial areas that have a higher aesthetic appeal to customers realize an increase in pedestrian activity. Buildings with a higher standard of architecture have increased resale value and realize more stable property values, which results in a more stable tax base.

The objective of these guidelines is to articulate clear community design principals that assist architects/engineers in understanding the County's minimum design criteria. These standards do not dictate or limit design or style of a building, as architectural diversity is encouraged but will encourage more thoughtful and aesthetically pleasing solutions to a building's design. The regulatory concept is to calculate design points for six different aspects of a building's design. The required point system of these standards allows flexibility in achieving the minimum number of **total** points for a particular building, while there is no minimum for any of the individual six factors. The six design rules or factors are fashioned to give a developer/architect some flexibility in achieving the minimum number of total points for a particular building.

Explanation of the Points

The numbering system provides a system that allows architects/engineers to be able to know, as they are designing the building, if the minimum scoring criteria are being met. Thus, upon submission of the plans to the Planning Division for architectural review, the architect/engineer will have a good degree of comfort that his or her design meets all minimum standards. The system also ensures the rating system is measured on a quantifiable level, therefore ensuring an equitable and non-arbitrary review among all applications.

The rules are divided into six categories and designed to encourage interesting building facades. Points are given for changing the plane of a building facade, for providing contrast with shade (porches, balconies, canopies), providing interesting design features, roof lines, wall openings (windows, doors) or additional landscaping & trees. Since most designs would not score enough points from an individual category, the objective for the building designer is to gain sufficient points in the combination of all six categories to achieve the minimum number for the particular classification. The scoring system is designed to achieve a simple minimum number of **10** for buildings planned for *Industrial use, **20** for buildings planned for **Office/Institutional use, and **25** for buildings planned for a ***Retail/Commercial use. *Industrial uses are defined by the Cobb County Zoning Ordinance as all permitted uses identified within the Light Industrial (LI) and Heavy Industrial (HI) zoning categories.

** Office/Institutional uses are defined by the Cobb County Zoning Ordinance as all permitted uses identified within the:

Low-Rise Office (LRO) Office/Services (OS) Office/Institutional (OI) Office Mid-Rise (OMR) Office Hi-Rise (OHR)

***Retail/Commercial uses are defined by the Cobb County Zoning Ordinance as all permitted uses identified within the:

Limited Retail Commercial (LRC) Community Retail Commercial (CRC) Planned Shopping Center(PSC) Tourist Services (TS) Urban Village Commercial (UVC) Neighborhood Retail Commercial (NRC) Neighborhood Shopping (NS) General Commercial (GC) Regional Retail Commercial (RRC) Planned Village Commercial (PVC)

THE SIX CATEGORIES ARE:

A. EXTERIOR WALL LENGTH:

This rule gives points for breaking long facades by a variation in the building surface, such as the projection/departure of walls.

B. EXTERIOR SURFACE AREAS:

This rule gives points for breaking walls in the vertical plane, such as providing roof slopes.

C. SHADE COVERAGE AREAS:

Points are awarded in this category for building facades that have projections or other features that provide building shadows, such as balconies, porches and canopies.

D. EXTERIOR WALL INTERRUPTIONS:

Doors, windows and other framed building openings that help to break up the "bleak" look of a long, blank wall. Points are given for the amount of openings in a building surface.

E. ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN TREATMENTS:

Points are given in this section for combinations of architectural design treatments, additional landscaping & trees.

F. FACADE DETAIL TREATMENTS:

Points are given in this section for combinations of 2 or more detail features.

USE OF GUIDELINES

The guidelines apply to new development on undeveloped parcels or redevelopment proposals involving demolition of existing structures. The guidelines will also apply when a permit is sought to remodel or make improvements that are equal to or greater than fifty percent (50%) of the total, current assessed value of the structure (as determined by the Building Valuation Data adopted by the Cobb County Board of Commissioners). If stipulations relating to the architecture of a building are placed on a development during a zoning case or stipulations have been placed on a piece of property prior to adoption of these standards, those stipulations will take precedent over these standards, if found to be in conflict. Otherwise, past and future zoning stipulations will be in concert with the adopted standards, with the strictest enforced.

These guidelines are only a portion of the overall development review conducted by the County. The laws, ordinances and development standards of the County are not negated by these review guidelines, but are in addition to the adopted laws and ordinances of the Cobb County Code. If any Guideline element is in conflict with, or is more stringent than any pertinent County Code, the more stringent requirement will be enforced.

Submission of Design Guideline Worksheet

Review of the worksheet is conducted by the Planning Division staff and not an architectural review committee, thereby ensuring an efficient review process. The architectural review will be concurrent with the Plan Review process and conducted in an expedient manner. At the time the developer/architect/engineer submits engineering drawings to Plan Review, the applicant will submit the following items for architectural review:

- 1) elevation drawings of all sides of the building,
- 2) footprint of building with all pertinent measurements needed for guideline calculation purposes (see worksheet),
- 3) list of building materials and associated color, size, style and
- 4) a completed architectural review worksheet, as supplied by the County.

Routine review time shall be no more than ten (10) business days, which will provide ample time for staff to conduct the review and for the architect/engineer, if necessary, to make any necessary revisions. Once architectural approval is granted, the architect/engineer/developer will be contacted and notified of the approval and all review items submitted by the applicant will be forwarded to the Plan Review Section, including the approved Guideline Worksheet.

Please note, prior to the adopted date of these standards, all plans submitted to Site Plan Review for approval, as well as sites currently being permitted and constructed, will be considered exempt.

Architectural Requirements

Architectural design of the building's exterior shall comply with the following minimum standards:

- 1. Building facades shall be of architectural treatments of glass and brick, stone, architectural block, stucco and/or wood (combining these finishes are allowed and encouraged).
- 2. Portable buildings shall be prohibited. Metal buildings are prohibited except for buildings that have an *Industrial use. Only then, a maximum of fifty percent (50%) of the building's side(s) or rear, when visible from the street, can be metal and shall be used in combination with another exterior building material noted in #1 above. However, the front of all *Industrial buildings must be made of a building material noted in #1 above. If an *Industrial building will be adjacent to a residentially zoned property, any side(s) of the building visible from that residentially zoned property shall not be made of metal.

- 3. The preferred roofing materials for roofs are metal, tile, slate, stone or wood shake. If typical shingles are used such as asphalt, the appearance should be that of slate, tile, metal, or shake.
- 4. Facades of anchor stores located within a multi-tenant buildings shall be varied in the depth of the footprint and in the height of each tenants roofline. Also, distinct architectural identity for the entry into separate businesses shall be provided in the facade.

Exterior building walls shall incorporate changes in building material, color or facade by using such elements as windows, doors, trellises, false windows, recessed panels, soldiered columns, or landscaping adjacent to, or growing on the building. Such changes should be frequent and determined by the height, length and overall scale of the building.

5. All mechanical, HVAC and like systems shall be screened from all street, driveway, pedestrian level views and residential views. Rooflines shall be designed to screen such equipment located atop buildings, and an opaque wall or fence of masonry, stucco, split-faced block, wood, etc. shall provide adequate screening for ground-based equipment.

Site Plan Recommendations

- 1. Where appropriate and feasible, buildings may be situated to the front of property setbacks with parking oriented toward the side and rear of structure(s).
- 2. Landscaping should be used to shield automobile parking lots from public vantage points, including streets and sidewalks.
- 3. Dumpsters should be located at the rear of a structure/site and should be enclosed with an opaque (solid) wall enclosure. The enclosure should be constructed of a masonry building material that is the same, or similar, to the primary structure and have gates made of metal.
- 4. Decorative lampposts, benches, bicycle racks & planters are all encouraged to improve the pedestrian sidewalk area and to encourage pedestrian activity.

Appeal of Guidelines

An applicant that does not meet the minimum design score and is appealing a scoring criteria element can do so to the Director of Community Development. An appeal of the Director's Determination can be made at one of the twice monthly meetings of the Cobb County Board of Commissioners (BOC). The BOC will only consider appeals of the staff's administrative decisions and scoring criteria. The BOC will not consider variances to these guidelines. An application for appeal can be filed with the Cobb County Board of Commissioners. Following the appeal review, the decision of the BOC shall be final.

A. EXTERIOR WALL LENGTH:

(NOTE: The street facing sides of all retail/commercial buildings require a minimum of two separate wall sections meeeting the requirements of A-F below.)				
1.	L = L	.eng	th in feet of building perimeter visible from the street. (see Figure 1)ft.	
2.	F = Length of the longest horizontal straight section of the exterior facade visible from the street. (see Figure 2) ft.			
	To determine if a horizontal straight section of building is two separate walls, the following will apply:			
		a.	There must be an intervening physical separation of space or wall which makes a horizontal separation of at least three feet (see Figure 2).	
		b.	The intervening physical separation of the space and wall must make a vertical separation of at least one foot (see Figure 3).	
		C.	The total perimeter- length of the intervening space or wall section must be at least five feet (i.e., section a. above must total five feet). (see Figure 3)	
		d.	Materials within the intervening section or the same plane section of the wall can be of the same building material or a different material to encourage contrast.	
		e.	When a wall section does not meet requirements of a, b and c above, the plane ????	
3.	W =	ratio	o of L/F =	
4.	Fa =	(W	(x 2)	

B. EXTERIOR SURFACE AREAS:

C.

1.	P = Total surface area of all flat and/or projected, non-sloping, sides of the building visible from the street. (i.e. the flat vertical exterior walls of the building) (see Figure 4) Sq ft.
2.	R = Total surface area of all sloping surfaces of the building that are visible from the street (i.e. roof of building)Sq ft. (see Figure 4)
	For the purpose of the calculation of "R":
	 a) Only sloping areas that range from 15 degrees to 75 decrees from the vertical point may be included in this calculation.
	 b) Circular, convex or concave wall surfaces must be offset at least one foot from the vertical wall surface and have an angle of at least 60 degrees to be included in the surface area calculation. (see Figure 4)
	c) \mathbf{Q} = the total number of building sides visible from the street.
3.	E = ratio of R/P =
4.	Fb = (10 x E) =
SH	HADE COVERAGE AREAS:
1.	S = Total covered but unenclosed structural exterior area attached to the building and measured on a horizontal plane. (see Figure 6) Sq ft.
	 a. The floor area of covered exterior balconies may be included. Attached canopies, porches, verandas, and other shade oriented structural design features may also be included.
	 Each vertical opening into the shaded area must be framed on the top and sides by structural building materials. The area around the "frame" of the opening must be at least 20% of the opening area. (see Figure 6)
	c. The area under detached canopies shall not be included in the calculation.
2.	G = Total area of the interior ground floor of the build Sq ft.
3.	C = ratio of S/G =
4.	Fc = (90 x C) =

D. EXTERIOR WALL INTERRUPTIONS:

(NOTE: A minimum of 20% of the flat, non-sloping area of all street facing sides of retail/commercial buildings are required to have openings through which light may pass meeting the definition of number one below.)

1.	W = Total number of windows, doors, and other openings into the structure through may pass	ugh which light			
	For the purpose of this calculation, each opening must be framed on the stop and/or bottom by structural building- materials that equal in surface at least 50% of the surface area of the opening.	-			
2.	Q = As previously calculated in Subsection B (2) (c) above, total number of visible sides from the street)				
3.	O = ratio of W/Q =				
4.	Fd = the ratio of O above, if total floor area is less than 50,000 sf. If floor area is or equal to 50,000 Sq ft Fd = shall be no more than 8 points.				
Ε.	ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN TREATMENTS:				
Th	ne intent of this section is to promote better architecture & visual interest.				
1.	Combination of (3) or more approved building materials on the primary building facade.	2 points			
2.	Additional landscaping @ primary facade (per 100 square Feet).	2 points			
3.	A combination of (3) of the following building design treatments.	4 points			
	 a. Canopy or portico b. Peaked roof forms c. Overhangs a minimum of (3) ft. wide with a minimum of a (6) inch wide fascia d. Arcade a minimum of (6) ft. wide e. Display windows a minimum of (4) ft. wide & (6) ft. high f. Ornamental & structural details integrated into the building Structure g. Clock or bell tower h. Sculptured art work (excluding advertising) i. Awnings over windows & doors j. Arches or arched forms k. Raised parapet with cornice? over primary entrance l. Decorative lamposts 				

m. Any other treatment that staff feels meets the intent of this section

Architectural Design Treatments: = _____ points

F. FACADE DETAIL TREATMENTS:

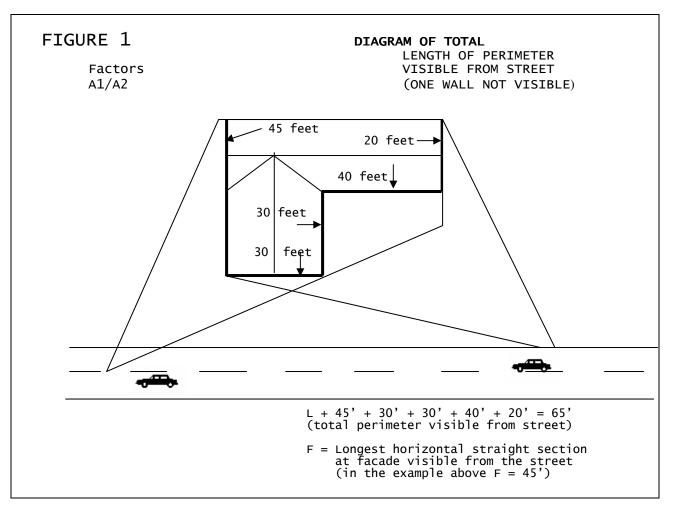
The intent of this section is to provide visual interest by adding (2) or (3) of the following detail features to the primary facade. All design elements shall repeat at intervals of no more than (25) ft. either vertically or horizontally.

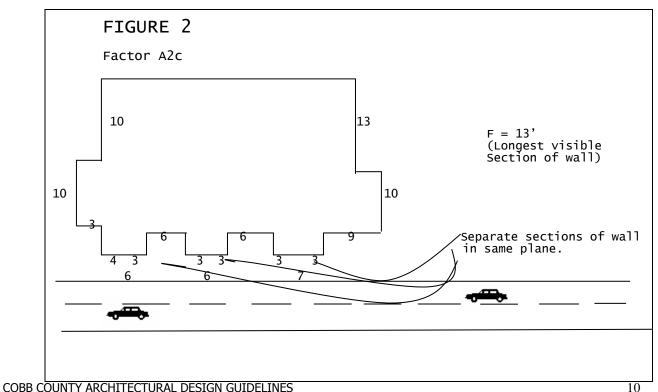
A combination of (2) of the following features: 2 points
A combination of (3) of the following features: 3 points
Each additional (2) features: 1 point

- A. Building step backs, offsets or projections a minimum of (3) ft. wide
- B. Color change
- C. Texture & / or material change
- D. Architectural banding
- E. Pattern change
- F. Soldiered columns
- G. Trellises
- H. Expression of a vertical architectural treatment a minimum of (12) in. Wide
- I. Recessed panels
- J. (3) or more roof planes
- K. Outdoor patio area with landscaping, shading & seating components

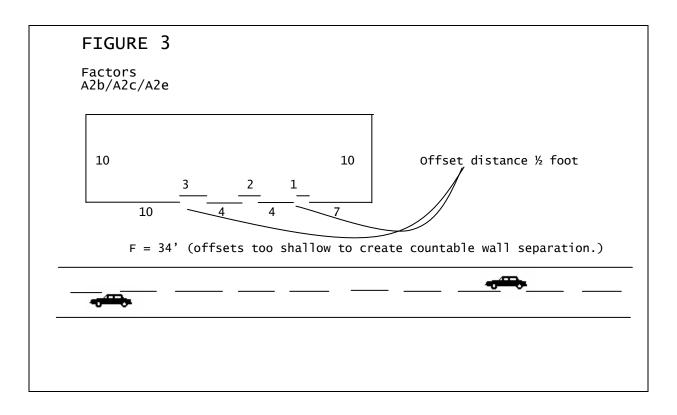
Facade Detail Treatm	ents: points
TOTAL DESIGN S	CORE: Fa+Fb+Fc+Fd+E+F=
Points Required:	Commercial/Retail = 25 points Office/Institutional = 20 points

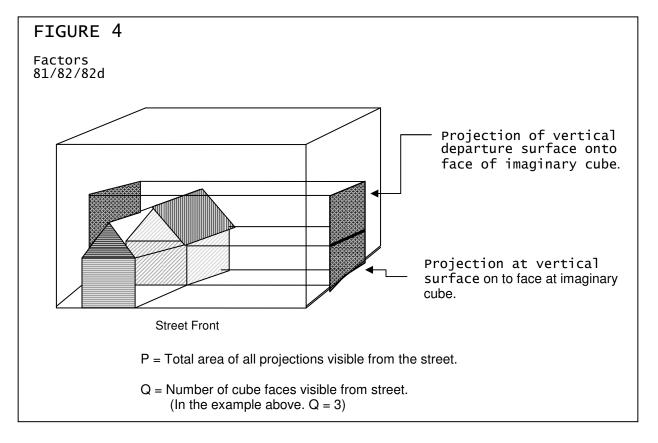
Industrial = 10 points

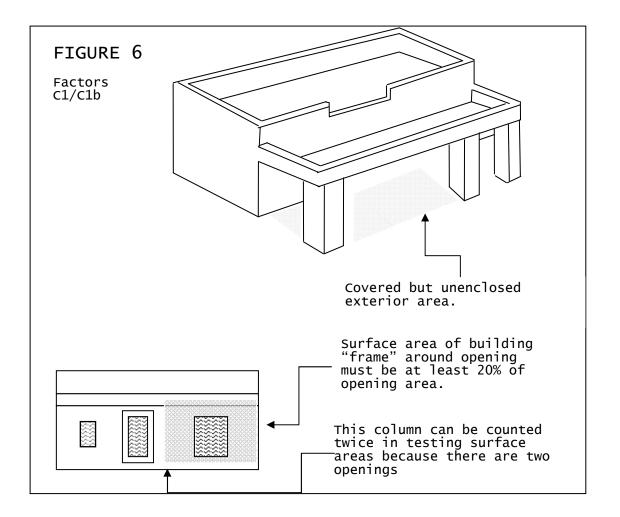




December 2005







A. Exterior Wall Length

(NOTE: The street facing of all retail/commercial buildings require a minimum of two separate wall sections meeeting the requirements of A-F below.)	
1. L = Length in feet of building perimeter visible from the street ft.	
2. F = Length of longest horizontal straight section of the exterior facade visible from street ft.	the
3. W = ratio of L / F =	
4. Fa = W x 2 =	
B. <u>Exterior Surface Areas</u>	
 P = Total surface area of all flat and/or projected, non-sloping, sides of the building visible from the street (i.e. the flat vertical exterior walls of the building) (see Figure 4) Sq ft 	
2. R = Total surface area of all sloping surfaces of the building that are visible from the street (i.e., roof of building) (see Figure 4) Sq ft	eet
3. E = Ratio of = R / P =	
4. Fb = 10 x E =	
C. <u>Shade Coverage Variables</u>	
S = Total covered but unenclosed structural exterior area attached to the building and measured on a horizontal plane. (see Figure 6) Sq ft	
2. G = Total area of the interior ground floor of the building = Sq ft	
3. C = Shade coverage ratio or S / G =	
4. Fc = 90 x C =	

D. EXTERIOR WALL INTERRUPTIONS

(NOTE: A minimum of 20% of the flat, non-sloping area of all street facing sides of	retail/
W = Total number of windows, doors, and other openings into the structure through which light may pass	
For the purpose of this calculation, each opening must be framed on the sides, top and/or bottom by structural building- materials that equal in surface area to at least 50% of the surface area of the opening.	
2. Q = As previously calculated in Subsection B (2) (c) above (total number of visible sides from the street)	
3. O = ratio of W/Q =	
4. Fd equals the ratio of O above, if total floor area is less than 50,000 sf. If floor area is greater than or equal to 50,000 s.f., Fd = shall be no more than 8 points	
E. <u>ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN TREATMENT</u> =	
F. FACADE DETAIL TREATMENTS =	
Total Design Score:	
TOTAL = Fa + Fb + Fc + Fd + E + F =	
Staff Comment:	

DEFINITIONS/USE OF TERMS

Aggregate Any of a variety of materials, such as sand and gravel, added to a cement mixture to

make concrete.

Arcading A series of arches, raised on columns, that are represented in relief as decoration of a

solid wall.

Articulation Shapes and surfaces having joints or segments which subdivide the area or elements

and which add scale and rhythm to an otherwise plain surface.

Assessed Value The most recently apprised value of a structure according to the Cobb County

Tax Assessors Office.

Balcony A projecting platform usually on the exterior of a building, sometimes

supported from below by brackets, wood, metal or masonry.

Baluster One of a number of short vertical members used to support a stair railing.

Band A flat horizontal fascia, or a continuous member or series of moldings

projecting slightly from the wall plane, encircling a building or along a wall,

that makes a division in the wall.

Bond An arrangement of masonry units laid in a particular pattern that provides a

contrasting stringcourse to the primary building's masonry pattern.

Border A margin, rim, or edge around or along an element; a design or a decorative

strip on the edge of an element.

Bracket A projection from a vertical surface providing structural or visual support

under cornices, balconies, windows, or any other overhanging member.

Building material Any material used in the construction of buildings, such as steel, concrete,

brick, masonry, glass, wood, among others.

Canopy A covered area which extends from the wall of a building, protecting an

enclosure such as a door or window.

Cap The top member of any vertical architectural element that projects such as the

cornice of a wall or the transom of a door.

Coping A protective covering over the top of a wall or parapet, either flat or sloping

and sometimes extending beyond the front wall.

Corbel A series of graduated projections, beginning at the face of the wall and

progressing outward and upward, that serves as a support for a top cornice.

Concave Forms that are curved like the inner surface of a hollow circle.

Convex Forms that have a surface or boundary that curves outward as in the exterior

or outer surface of a circle.

Cornice A projecting shelf along the top of a wall supported by a series of brackets;

the ornamental exterior trim where the building's roof meets the wall.

Crenellation A pattern of repeated depressed openings in a parapet wall.

Door A hinged, sliding, tilting, or folding panel for closing openings in a wall or at entrances

to buildings, rooms, or cabinets and closets.

Dressing Masonry and moldings of better quality than the facing materials, used

around door and window openings or at corners of buildings.

Eave The projecting overhang at the lower edge of a roof that sheds rainwater.

Elevation A drawing showing the vertical, exterior elements of a building as a direct

projection to a vertical plane.

Façade The main exterior face of a building, particularly one of its main sides facing

a public space, almost always containing one or more entrances and noted by

elaborate exterior stylistic details.

Fenestration The design and placement of windows and other exterior openings in a

building.

Floor Area The gross horizontal area of the floor(s) of a building, excluding porches, balconies,

etc and measured from the exterior face of the exterior walls of a building.

Frieze An elevated horizontal continuous band or panel that is usually located below the

cornice and often decorated with a repeated pattern.

Gable The entire triangular end of a wall, above the level of the eaves, that conforms to the

slope of the roof to which it abuts.

Horizontal Operating or in the direction of a plane along the horizon or a base line.

Intervening To occur, disrupt, or come between points.

Mansard roof A roof with a steep lower slope and a flatter upper slope on all sides, either of convex

or concave shape.

Masonry A building material that includes all stone products, all brick products and all

concrete block units, including decorative and customized blocks.

Molding A decorative profile given to architectural cavities or projections such as

cornices, bases, or door and window jambs/heads.

Parallel Extending in the same direction and not meeting or intersecting.

Parapet A low protective wall or railing along the edge and above a roof, balcony, or similar

structure.

Perimeter The outer boundary of a closed plane diagram or figure.

Plane The simplist kind of two-dimensional surface, generated by the path of a

straight line and defined by its length and width; usually defined by its shape

and surface characteristics.

Porch A roofed entrance, either incorporated in a building or as an applied feature to the

exterior.

Quoin One of a series of stones or bricks used to mark or visually reinforce the

exterior corners of a building and often through a contrast of size, shape,

color or material.

Rectangular A plane four-sided parallelogram with four right angles: may be nearly

square or stretched out to be nearly a band.

Relief A projecting wall decoration raised above the background plane.

Rendering A drawing of a building that artistically delineates materials, scale, shades,

and is done for the purpose of presentation.

Ridge The horizontal lines at the junction of the upper edges of two sloping roof

structures.

Rhythm Any kind of movement characterized by the regular occurrence of elements,

lines, shapes and forms.

Soffit A ceiling or exposed underside surface of a roof overhang, archway, balcony,

beam or column.

Soldier Bond Brick, block or stone laid vertically with the longer, narrow face exposed.

Veranda Similar to a balcony but located on the ground level and can extend around

one, two or all sides of a building.

Vertical Opposite to the plane of the horizon, usually a direction rising straight

upward and downward.

Window An opening in an exterior wall of a building to admit light and air.